

the . agrarian kitchen®

Media Kit

PREPARED BY

provides communications and events
pax
Mondo

PORTFOLIO



Restaurant

*A celebration
of provenance
through
growing,
teaching and
dining.*



Kitchen Garden



Cooking School



Kiosk



Events

the
agrarian
kitchen®



Background

OUR STORY

The Agrarian Kitchen is a celebration of provenance through growing, teaching and dining, encompassing a cooking school, an award-winning restaurant and an outdoor kiosk all centred around the heart of the enterprise, the walled kitchen garden.

The Agrarian Kitchen was founded in 2008 when co-founders Rodney Dunn and Séverine Demanet opened the cooking school and farm within their home in the Old Schoolhouse in Lachlan, Tasmania. It was borne from a longing to connect back to the earth, and to grow and cook authentic food with real ingredients.

The next chapter in the Agrarian journey began in 2015 after Rodney and Séverine fell in love with the beautiful Bronte building in nearby New Norfolk's Willow Court - the town's old mental asylum. With vast expansive space, large windows and high ceilings lined with the original pressed metal, the building begged to be filled with diners. The Agrarian Kitchen restaurant was born in June 2017.

The kiosk opened in 2020 as a casual outdoor food offering, still utilising the amazing produce in pastries, cakes, sandwiches and salads. The vibe on the front lawn is picnic tables and rugs, with dogs and children in equal measure soaking up the sunshine.

In 2022, the cooking school relocated from Rodney and Séverine's farm to the Bronte building at Willow Court, joining the restaurant and kiosk in a newly constructed wing of the building with a purpose-built kitchen.

The final piece of the puzzle is the kitchen garden, located just metres behind the Bronte building. The garden informs every aspect of the operation, dictating the menu at the kiosk, restaurant and cooking school. It serves as a space for learning, insight and inspiration, where visitors can take garden tours, cooking class guests gather ingredients for the day or where keen gardeners garner knowledge during workshops.



the
agrarian
kitchen®

Bios

WHO WE ARE

**Rodney Dunn, Co-Founder and Executive Chef**

Rodney worked under Tetsuya Wakuda at the Sydney restaurant Tetsuya's before moving into food media, working as a food researcher for the Better Homes and Gardens television program and as food editor of Gourmet Traveller magazine from 2004-2007. In order to indulge his passion for growing fruit and vegetables, raising pigs, milking goats and keeping honey bees, Rodney and Séverine moved to Tasmania to open The Agrarian Kitchen Cooking School in Lachlan, Derwent Valley in 2008. In 2010, it was voted as Australia's "Greatest Gourmet Food Experience" by Australian Traveller Magazine.

In June 2017, Rodney and Séverine opened The Agrarian Kitchen restaurant in nearby New Norfolk's Willow Court precinct. Just four months after opening, the restaurant was awarded two hats and voted *Best Regional Restaurant in Australia* by Fairfax in the National Good Food Guide. Rodney has authored two books with Penguin Random House Australia under its Lantern imprint, entitled *The Agrarian Kitchen* and *The Truffle Cookbook*.

**Séverine Demanet, Co-Founder and General Manager**

With a diverse background in hospitality management, corporate affairs and waste management, Séverine's unique and dimensional skillset has been pivotal in shaping The Agrarian Kitchen's success story. When Rodney and Séverine relocated to Tasmania in 2007, fuelled with ambition and a dedication to their dreams, Séverine's prior grant writing experience was crucial in establishing the original cooking school at Lachlan and later, the restaurant site at the historic Willow Court building in New Norfolk that is now accompanied by the newly developed cooking school and a one-acre walled kitchen garden.

Séverine's commitment to The Agrarian Kitchen has remained resolute throughout the past 15 years, actively overseeing the day-to-day operations of the cooking school, restaurant, and kiosk.



Stephen Peak, Head Chef

Stephen came to The Agrarian Kitchen in 2018 after he saw an opportunity to focus his cooking on what he is most passionate about; high quality ingredients from local producers. He quickly stepped into the role of Head Chef where he has been able to establish close working relationships with Tasmanian producers and growers bringing local ingredients to the forefront of high-quality dining in Tasmania.

Stephen grew up in the Northern Rivers in NSW and trained as a Chef in several high-end restaurants. A stint in London saw him working at Paxton Whitfield Cheesemongers where his passion for small scale dairy production began. This passion has been instrumental in building the in-house cheese program at The Agrarian Kitchen, something the team are proud to offer to every restaurant guest. Stephen also teaches cheese making classes at the cooking school.



Laura Cuthbert, Restaurant Manager

Laura has the kind of personality that excels in the hospitality industry - an innate nature to anticipate guests' needs before even they know them, and to deliver service with a fun and energetic style.

Having honed her hospitality skills in a number of venues in Hobart, Laura has worked at The Agrarian Kitchen for several years, starting as a section waiter and working up to Restaurant Manager as her dedication, work ethic and leadership skills shone through. She leads an exceptional team of hospitality professionals with genuine care and infectious enthusiasm to deliver smooth, unpretentious service.



Alex Keene, Beverage Manager

Beverage Manager Alex Keene's talent, among other things, lies in creating innovative, produce-driven drinks, from unique cocktails to non-alcoholic beverages. Alex carefully crafts these drinks from wild foraged herbs, plants and flowers and produce grown in the kitchen garden. A selection of juices, ferments and brews create a non-alcoholic beverage selection to pair with the menu that is every bit as interesting as the alcoholic selection.

Alex's deep passion for hospitality, developed from a love of travelling, allows him to draw inspiration from dining at some of the best restaurants around the world to create a memorable experience for guests. At The Agrarian Kitchen, Alex carefully curates the beverage offering, seeking to work with and promote local and interstate wineries, breweries and distilleries that align with The Agrarian Kitchen philosophy of caring for the land and allowing the beverages to be unadulterated and the produce shine through.



Mitch Thiessen, Head Gardener

Head Gardener at The Agrarian Kitchen, Mitch Thiessen has a tangible passion for working outdoors and nurturing plants, coming from a long line of apple farmers from the Huon Valley. Mitch comes to gardening after years working as a qualified chef. His interest in quality, local food and regenerative farming led him to working with farming legend Tony Scherer of Rocky Top Farm. For almost four years he was mentored by and worked closely with Tony, learning many aspects of mechanical and hand-scale market gardening.

Mitch is a natural teacher, honed whilst working as a Kitchen and Garden Specialist within the MONA 24 Carrot Garden project, an initiative that connects primary schools with local food production. Mitch brings his great teaching skills to the kitchen garden tours where his passion is undeniable. Mitch's deepest interest lies in building healthy biological systems, which are productive, but are also restorative and sustainable, an approach he has woven into the design of the kitchen garden of The Agrarian Kitchen.

PORTFOLIO

Restaurant

Offering a truly local food experience, the restaurant's set lunch menu sources ingredients from the surrounding land, whether it's the kitchen garden or via a network of local gardeners, producers, farmers and fishermen.

It is weeks, months and sometimes years in the making, beginning when seeds are planted. Fruit and vegetables enter the kitchen within minutes of harvest. Fishermen deliver their catch just hours out of the water. Meat comes as a whole carcass to be hung and broken down as required. In the kitchen, these ingredients meet the fire power of the handcrafted wood-fired oven, grill and hot-smoker, all built from old bricks off the Willow Court site by master craftsman Dennis Benson.

It is here that the kitchen team, led by Head Chef Stephen Peak, practise the ancient crafts of cheese making, whole animal butchery, smoking, fermentation, wood-fired cooking, bread making and charcuterie.

This philosophy also extends to what is served by the glass, where a responsible radius is applied to the selection of wine, beer and spirits by Beverage Manager Alex Keene, all the while drawing on foraged local ingredients and the produce from the kitchen garden to create the restaurant's own syrups and fermented concoctions for cocktails and non-alcoholic beverages.

The set menu is priced at \$180 per person with an optional house-made cheese course. The experience begins with a snack course in The Agrarian Kitchen's on-site kitchen garden, allowing for a truly immersive connection to place, before settling in to the restaurant space for the remainder of the eight-course menu. Diners can choose from alcoholic or non-alcoholic matched beverages or alternatively order from the beverage list.

The vision is to create a space where local, seasonal produce is celebrated. Where the diner experiences a true sense of place through the food they eat. Where the ingredients speak for themselves with little adornment.

[Click here to view a sample menu.](#)



PORTFOLIO



Education

The Agrarian Kitchen believes wholeheartedly in the power of shared knowledge and stories. Offering cooking, gardening and lifestyle classes, the enterprise provides abundant opportunities for visitors to learn together in small groups.

The cooking school began in 2008 at Rodney and Séverine's farm in Lachlan, and now finds it home in a wing of the Bronte building, adjacent to the restaurant and kiosk. The space has been beautifully renovated to preserve the history of the building, and fitted with the latest AEG induction cooktops and top-of-the-range cookware, with an open fireplace and ample space for up to 24 students.

The cooking classes are always about making food from its base elements, including the best, freshly harvested produce from the garden, as well as local, humanely raised and hunted meat and dairy, and sustainably sourced Tasmanian seafood. Classes are immersive, highlighting the many benefits of the human connection to nature, specifically through the food they make and consume.

The Agrarian Experience class is the best way to get a taste of the season with the menu crafted from the best of the garden that day. Masterclasses are for the deeper dive, with everything from learning the butchery elements of how to breakdown a carcass, to making your own cheese, bread, charcuterie or pastry. The aim is to teach the practical skills that students can use in their own kitchens.

Knowledge-sharing also extends to gardening and lifestyle education. The Gardening Fundamentals class is designed for those who wish to build their own vegetable garden from scratch or learn techniques to make an existing garden better. There are also a range of other specific skill-based workshops from grafting fruit trees, propagation, protected growing, to composting and everything in between. Lifestyle classes focus on sustainable living, sharing a love for mindful making and wellbeing.

[Click here to view the class calendar.](#)



PORTFOLIO



Garden

The Agrarian Kitchen's garden is at the heart of the whole enterprise. Located in Willow Court's former exercise yard, just metres from the restaurant and cooking school, is a one-acre, walled space contained within five metre concrete walls, designed by Head Gardener Mitch Thiessen.

Although the garden serves many functions, its primary aim is to provide high quality, nutrient dense fruit and vegetables for use in the restaurant, kiosk and classes. Underlying this production is a garden system focused on promoting a flourishing of soil and insect life, building soil fertility and minimising outside inputs.

The garden is food-focused in its design and comprises a market garden, berry patch, greenhouse, shade house, nursery, orchards, citrus grove, composting station, as well as ornamental areas. The design drew inspiration from numerous fields including, science-led regenerative farming, small-scale market gardening, as well as permaculture and naturalistic design. These many approaches were considered whilst balancing a practical, pragmatic systems approach to the design with overall longevity in mind. The garden is tended using organic principles, without the use of synthetic fertilisers, pesticides or herbicides.

Overall, the garden serves as the beginning and end of The Agrarian Kitchen. It provides the foundation for the philosophies that underpin the enterprise. It dictates the menus and drives creativity in the kitchen and classes. The garden also receives all organic waste, from bones and shells to paper waste and food scraps, allowing these valuable resources to be transformed into fertiliser for the garden. Ultimately, the garden creates the core of an agrarian tradition. Guests can experience the garden through a number of different tours and classes throughout the year.



PORTFOLIO

Kiosk

The Agrarian Kitchen Kiosk is a more casual and relaxed affair, offering a selection of pastries, cakes, sandwiches, salads and cheese, all made daily in house. These delicious snacks are best enjoyed on the front lawn with a cocktail; glass or bottle of local wine, beer, cider or a hot beverage.

The family friendly vibe on the front lawn allows guests to relax under umbrellas on the picnic tables, and rugs, with dogs and children in equal measure soaking up the sunshine.

Alternatively, take it away to enjoy at a picnic spot within the beautiful Derwent Valley.



MEDIA KIT — P.10

Events

Just a 30-minute drive from Hobart, but a world away in the small town of New Norfolk in the beautiful Derwent Valley, The Agrarian Kitchen offers a true Tasmanian food experience in a unique, historic setting.

Packages are available upon request for weddings, private events and corporate cooking classes, cooking demonstrations and garden tours.



the
agrarian
kitchen® 





RESOURCES

Image Library

Please credit images according to folder names.

[Image Library](#)

Key Information

[Website](#)

Social Media

[Instagram](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Facebook](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Youtube](#)

the
agrarian
kitchen®





CONTACTS

AMANDA VALLIS

amanda@paxmondo.agency
0408 169 692

LAURA DYBA

laura@paxmondo.agency
0432 256 582

SOCIAL MEDIA

Instagram
@paxmondo.agency
Tiktok
@PaxMondo.Agency

the .
agrarian
kitchen®

IMAGE CREDITS:

Images by Anna Critchley, Adam Gibson & Dearna Bond
Portraits by Luke Burgess and Anna Critchley

SPONSORS:

Vintec AEG

IRONCLAD PAN Co
GUARANTEED FOR THREE GENERATIONS